Gc
929.2
M451506b
2032762

M. L.

REYNOLDS HISTORICAL
GENEALOGY COLLECTION

ALLEN COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY
3 1833 01411 0073

The Maxwell Family

from

THE STORY OF CONNECTICUT

by Col. Charles W. Burpee

Privately Printed

ROCKVILLE, CONNECTICUT

1939

1944 6

The Maxwell Family

The Maxwell Family

2032762

Rec'd Feb. 14-1979

The Maxwell Family

I

THE Maxwell family of Rockville, whose members have long been prominent in the public life of the State and in the fortunes of the Hockanum Mills Company, traces it origin to a remote period in European history. Before the thirteenth century, the Maxwells were established in the upper social rank of Scotland, and in the succeeding centuries, Scottish and English branches gained many titles of nobility, including two earldoms, four baronies, and five baronetcies. Concerning the earliest records, Eleanor Lexington has written, in a brochure entitled, "The House of Maxwell":

The ancient and honorable house of Maxwell, so conspicuously connected with the history of Scotland, and considered one of the most distinguished in North Britain, is generally believed to have been founded by Maccus, son of Undwyn, in the twelfth century. There is another tradition regarding the

founder of the family—that Maccus was the son of Anlaf, King of Northumbria, 940 A. D., and that the descendants of Maccus, with fourteen other families, retired into Scotland when England submitted to William the Conqueror, 1066.

Maccuswell, meaning Maccus's well or pool, was the first form of the name. In Gaelic the name was Maesual or MacSual. The name which began as Maccuswell or de Moccuswell, became, in course of time, Maxwell, the transition being a natural one.

The son of Maccus was Sir Herbert de Maccuswell. His son was John de Maccuswell, great chamberlain of Scotland, and Sheriff of Roxburgshire from 1203 to 1207. He was succeeded by his brother, Sir Aymer de Maccuswell, Lord of Caerlaverock, who, in the time of Alexander III, was justicular of Galloway. He left two sons, Sir Hubert and Sir John. From Sir Hubert sprang the Lords Maxwell, Earls of Nithsdale; from Sir John, the Maxwells of Calderwood, of Polo Pollock, of Cardoness, and the Barons and Earls of Farnham. It was Sir Hubert, son of Maccus, who was the first to adopt the name in its present form Maxwell. This was in the twelfth century, and Maxwell is therefore one of the first surnames assumed in Scotland—surnames not being generally adopted until the twelfth century.

From earliest times we find that family pledging their lives, their fortunes and their sacred honors to their country. "Gallant John" won his spurs at

Chevy Chase, 1388. John, fourth Lord Maxwell, was at the battle of Flodden, September 9, 1513. Robert, ninth Lord Maxwell, was celebrated like his ancestor, Sir Eustace Maxwell, in the time of Edward I, by his brave defense of Caerlaverock against the Parliamentarians in 1640. James Maxwell was groom of the bedchamber of Charles I. Thomas Maxwell commanded the rear guard at the Battle of Athlone in 1691, and "held the bridge" on that eventful day, as we read in Macaulay. In Great Britain's recent wars the family received honors upon honors.

"In Americans of Royal Descent" we find interesting data relative to the family, and that certain branches may claim lineage from Alfred the Great, from Rhodimawn King of Wales, 876 A. D.; from William the Conqueror, from Duffus, seventy-eighth King of Scotland, 1000 A. D., and from Machertus, 118th monarch of Ireland, 1119.

Burke's Peerage emblazons the Maxwells of Caerlaverock arms as follows: Quarterly, first and fourth argent, a saltier sable, on a chief of the first three pellets of the second; second and third barry of six, argent and gules. Crest, a buck's head erased, proper. Supporters, two bucks proper. Motto: "Je suis prêt"—I am ready. There is a pretty story regarding the motto:—When "Wallace, in great straits, was hiding in caves and glens near Lanark, the leader of the Maxwell clan hunted him up and offered the services of himself and followers. To

this Wallace replied: 'Ready, aye ready, Noble Scot.' "

During the reign of King James I of England one branch of the Maxwell family crossed the Irish sea and settled in the North of Ireland, whence came the Maxwells, of Rockville. The American progenitor was Hugh Maxwell, born April 8, 1700, in County Tyrone, Ulster, of Scottish and Irish stock. He came to the American colonies in 1733, accompanied by his wife, Sarah (Corbett) Maxwell, and their son, Hugh (2) Maxwell, born April 27, (O.S.) 1733. Hugh (1) Maxwell later resided, according to Vital Records, at Bedford, Massachusetts. He died on March 19, 1759, and his wife in 1769.

II

HUGH (2) MAXWELL and his brother, Thompson Maxwell, carried the fame of the family to great heights during the period which witnessed the birth of the American nation, both serving with distinction in the French and Indian Wars and in the Revolution. Hugh Maxwell was in action at Lake George and Fort William Henry, during the siege by Montcalm and escaped the massacre at Fort William Henry in 1756. During the early period of the Revolution he was in command of a company of Bedford Minute Men and as senior captain in Colonel Prescott's regiment, laid out the

ground for the entrenchment on Bunker Hill a day or so before that battle. He participated in the battle there, was at the siege of Boston, the retreat from Long Island, the battles of Princeton, Trenton, Monmouth and Saratoga, suffered in the camps at Morristown and Valley Forge. For three years he served under General William Heath. Later, under General Washington, Hugh Maxwell rose to the rank of lieutenant colonel. He was seriously shot in the shoulder at Bunker Hill but continued in active service with the Continental Army until April, 1784. In civil life, Colonel Maxwell obtained the charter for the town of Heath, Massachusetts, which he was instrumental in having named after General Heath, his commanding officer in the Revolution, and was the first Justice commissioned in that section as well as the first deacon in the first church. In 1774, he was a member of the Massachusetts Provincial Congress. After the Revolution, he surveyed a considerable part of Central New York State, near Canandaigua and formulated the plan of the survey laying out the territory in one mile squares, said to be the first surveying of that kind and later adopted by the United States. Hugh Maxwell died and was buried at sea on October 14, 1799, as evidenced by an inventory of his effects, at the age of sixty-seven years. A monument was erected in his memory by his grandchildren at Heath, Massachusetts, whose inscriptions read:

2032762

Hugh Maxwell in Heath, Massachusetts

A soldier and an officer in the French War from 1755 to 1764; escaped the massacre at Fort William Henry 1756; a member of the first Provincial Congress 1774; a brave and faithful officer in the war of the Revolution from April 1775 to April 1784; was at the siege of Boston and the retreat from Long Island and New York; fought at Bunker Hill, Trenton, Princeton, Saratoga, and Monmouth; suffered in the camps at Morristown and Valley Forge; watched for 3 years on the lines near New York under General Heath who said of him, "Often have I slept without fear of being surprised because I knew you were at the out-post." In civil life he obtained the charter of this town, was the first Justice commissioned in the section, the first deacon in the first church in this town, a Christian Patriot and Christian soldier; Honored his God, served his country, loved his family, to duty was ever true, to his posterity his memory is a rich inheritance. May they emulate his virtues.

This monument was erected by his grandchildren July 4th, 1859.

(Inscription on old tombstone of Hugh Maxwell.)

"The wise, the just, the pious and the brave,
Live in their deaths and glory from the grave;
Grain hid in earth repays the precious care,
And evenings' suns but set to rise more fair.
Death's terror is the mountain faith removes;

'Tis faith disarms destruction,
Believe, and look with triumph on the tomb."
To the memory of Mrs. Bridget Maxwell, who died Jan. 15, 1816 aet: 81 years.
"Dust thou art and to dust shalt thou return."

Hugh (2) Maxwell married, in 1759, Bridget Monroe, of Lexington, Massachusetts, where the Monroe Tavern was long a famous landmark of the countryside. Their son, Sylvester Maxwell, third in descent from the American progenitor, was born at Heath, Massachusetts, in 1775, and died in December, 1858. He was graduated from Yale College in 1797, and the family has his class book—said to be the first class book of Yale. Sylvester Maxwell practiced law at Charlemont, Massachusetts, and married Tirzah Taylor, of Buckland. They became the parents of eight children, four sons and four daughters, among whom was George Maxwell, born in Charlemont, Massachusetts, July 30, 1817. He was the first of the Rockville Maxwells.

III

GEORGE MAXWELL came to Rockville in 1843 and was engaged for four years as a general merchant. At the end of that time he entered the New England Mills, of Rockville, and ten years later became treasurer of the Hockanum

Mills, of which he was subsequently president. Following the reorganization of the New England Mills he was elected president of that concern and was also, variously, president of the Rockville National Bank, the Rockville Gas Light Company, the Rockville Railway Company and the Rockville Water and Aqueduct Company; treasurer of the Springville Company; and a director of many corporations, including the Society for Savings of Hartford, the Hartford Trust Company, the Hartford Automatic Machine Screw Company and the National Fire Insurance Company. A forceful man of the highest executive capacities, he made the name Hockanum famous the world over as a synonym for quality in woolen manufacture, and throughout the entire range of his business interests his judgment was implicitly relied upon by his associates. He possessed, in addition, an enlightened sense of civic obligation, manifested in his many contributions to the progress of the commonwealth as a private citizen and by his service in the General Assembly in 1871 and as State Senator for the term beginning in 1873. The George Maxwell Memorial Library at Rockville, one of the finest examples of institutional architecture in the State, was erected in his memory by the Maxwell family. Mr. Maxwell died on April 2, 1891, and the honors paid him in his lifetime have their echo in the respect in which his memory is held by later citizens of the commonwealth he loved.

He married, on November 3, 1846, Harriet Kellogg, born in 1824, died on January 24, 1913, daughter of George and Eliza (Noble) Kellogg, of Rockville. Eliza (Noble) Kellogg was the daughter of the Rev. Gideon Noble, who is buried in Willington. Rev. Gideon Noble's son fought as a fifer in the Revolution, and the Connecticut Assembly voted Rev. Gideon expense money to pay on account of his illness. Mr. and Mrs. George Maxwell were the parents of the following children: 1. Arthur. 2. Eliza Kellogg. 3. George Hugh. 4. Harriet Augusta. 5. Edwin Noble. 6. J. Alice. 7. Francis Taylor, of whom further. 8. William, of whom further. 9. Robert.

IV

FRANCIS TAYLOR MAXWELL, son of George and Harriet (Kellogg) Maxwell, and fifth in line of descent from Hugh (1) Maxwell, was born at Rockville, on January 4, 1861. He was educated in the public schools of his birthplace, completing the high school course in 1880, and soon afterward entered the office of the Hockanum Company under his father. He was employed at first as a bookkeeper, but as he learned the business and demonstrated his capacity for larger responsibilities he rose gradually within the organization, serving successively as secretary, treasurer and finally as

president of the company. As executive head of the Hockanum Mills over the long period of fifty-seven years, he fully maintained the fine traditions of the company, continuing its large business and directing its affairs with sure hand until his retirement on June 1, 1934. Meanwhile, his interests increased widely in other fields, bringing him many additional responsibilities which he met with fidelity and success. Mr. Maxwell became president of the Rockville National Bank and the Springville Company and acquired holdings in numerous other corporations, of which he served as director. These include: the New England Company, the Minterburn Mills Company, the American Mills Company, the Aeolian Company, the Weber Piano Company, the Aeolian Hall Company, the Aeolian Weber Piano and Pianola Company, the New York, New Haven and Hartford Railroad Company, the New York, Ontario and Western Railroad, the New England Steamship Company, the Hartford and New York Transportation Company, the Travelers Insurance Company, the Travelers Indemnity Company, the Travelers Fire Insurance Company, the National Fire Insurance Company, the Colonial Securities Company, the Central Hanover Bank and Trust Company of New York City, the First National Bank of Hartford, the Capewell Horse Nail Company, the Rockville Mutual Fire Insurance Company and the Rockville Water and Aqueduct Company. He is also a cor-

porator of the Savings Bank of Rockville and has served his community as president of the Rockville Public Library and of the Rockville City Hospital, although of late years he has resigned from many of his directorates.

Mr. Maxwell's career has been characterized by his progressive outlook and great energy, combined with an ability to harmonize discordant elements. These qualities have been decisive in his administration of business interests and have been of equal value in the many public services he has undertaken, following the fine traditions of his family. At Rockville, he has given generously of his means and effort in the public interest and for many years has had an important influence in public life, both of the city and State. In 1896 he was a member of the Rockville City Council; in 1899 was elected to the General Assembly, where he served as chairman of the insurance committee; and in 1901 took his seat in the State Senate, where he was prominent in the work of several committees and was chairman of the committee on education. On April 22, 1892, he was appointed to the personal staff of Governor Morgan G. Bulkeley with the rank of colonel and in 1893 accompanied the Governor to the World's Fair opening in Chicago, Illinois. He is a leading Republican of Connecticut and was a delegate to the National Republican conventions of 1900, 1904, 1916, 1920 and 1924. He was a guest at the 1928 convention and in

1904, 1924 and 1928 was a Republican Presidential Elector from Connecticut.

During the period of the World War, when the Hockanum Mills Company, under his leadership, devoted fifty per cent of its production to government orders, Mr. Maxwell also served as a member of the United States Labor Board for his district; as a member of the executive committee of the County Red Cross; and as chairman of all Liberty Loan drives for the Rockville district, each one of which went "over the top." In his splendid work in this capacity, he was ably assisted by Mrs. Maxwell, who, as chairman of the women's branch, had entire charge of that department, taking Liberty Bond subscriptions in excess of $3,000,000.

While the greater part of his life has been devoted to the world of large affairs, Mr. Maxwell is also known as a man of many cultural interests and artistic tastes, which are reflected in his membership in the Royal Society of Arts of London and the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. He is also a member of the Connecticut Historical Society, which he has served as an officer; the Society of Colonial Wars, the Sons of the American Revolution and other patriotic societies; the Hartford Club, of Hartford; the Union League and Metropolitan clubs of New York City and the National Woolen Manufacturers' Association and American Geographical Society.

On November 18, 1896, Francis Taylor Maxwell married Florence Russell Parsons, of Providence, Rhode Island, daughter of P. F. Parsons, a prominent merchant of that city. Mr. and Mrs. Maxwell have three daughters: 1. Helen, born April 19, 1898, married F. N. Belding. 2. Priscilla, born April 13, 1899, married H. Wendell Endicott. 3. Harriet Kellogg, born February 26, 1903. There are four grandchildren.

V

WILLIAM MAXWELL, eighth child of George and Harriet (Kellogg) Maxwell, was born at Rockville on December 7, 1862. He attended local public schools, completing the high school course in 1881, and subsequently entered Yale College, from which he was graduated in 1885 with the degree of Bachelor of Arts. As an undergraduate he was active in campus life, becoming a member of the Psi Upsilon fraternity, and distinguished himself in athletics. For several years he was a member of the Mott Haven Athletic Club. After his graduation, Mr. Maxwell spent a number of months in North Dakota and at the end of that time returned to Connecticut to assume an active part in the business and industrial life of the State. When corporate powers were obtained for the Springville Manufacturing Company, one of his father's mills, he

was elected secretary and assistant treasurer of the corporation, succeeding his father as treasurer upon the latter's death. Mr. Maxwell's activities were long devoted to the representative enterprises of Rockville and the State with which the family name is closely associated. Mr. Maxwell retired in 1934 and resigned from several offices both as officer and director. He had served for many years as president and a director of the Hockanum Company; treasurer of the Hockanum Mills Company and the American Mills Company; a director of the New England Company, the Minterburn Company, the Hartford-Connecticut Trust Company, the Hartford Fire Insurance Company, and the Rockville Water and Aqueduct Company. He was a director of the Rockville Building and Loan Association and the Rockville Mutual Fire Insurance Company, and is also president of the Savings Bank of Rockville. He has had an important part in the counsels of all these enterprises, and his judgment in matters connected with their operation has always been regarded by his associates with profound respect.

Despite the pressure of his business interests, Mr. Maxwell, like other members of his family for many generations, has found time to take an active part in public life and to serve his community in various capacities. As a Republican, he has been influential in his party and in past years served the City of Rockville as city assessor. He was a member of

the Rockville High School Committee, a responsibility in which he has taken special interest, and over a long period was secretary of the Rockville Public Library. He is a member of the Union Congregational Church of Rockville, of which he was clerk for many years, and is a member of several clubs, including the Hartford Club, of Hartford, the Yale Club of New York City; the Automobile Club of America, the Metropolitan Club of New York, the Farmington Country Club and the Hartford Golf Club.